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John Cassidy
A Station in the Delta
(Scribners—July)

"In 1973 I retired after 25 years with the CIA. My last assignment abroad was in Vietnam, and when I returned home I found that my war had little resemblance to the war the American public was hearing about through our news media.

"I feel strongly about the war, even ten years later. Perhaps we never should have entered it. But we did, and we allied ourselves with an admirable and courageous people who had a right to expect us to be loyal to them. We were not. The American public was misinformed and confused; our government leaders were angry and frightened, and we deserted a gallant ally. It was, I think, a shameful blot on our country's history.

"And so I wrote a war novel, only it isn't a war novel, it's primarily a love story. War-time Vietnam was so rich a setting for a novel that the characters I invented took on lives of their own, and soon became more important to me than the rather pompous message I had set out to deliver. I had heard that characters do come to life this way for the writer, but I had never really believed it. Now I do. I fell head over heels in love with Therese, my little Vietnamese war widow.

"The message is still there, and is still heartfelt, but it is an incidental, and, I hope, not too obtrusive part of the story. If I have succeeded, the reader will come to see the war as I saw it, and share my admiration and affection for the Vietnamese people. Above all, however, I hope that *A Station in the Delta* is a good story, reasonably well told."